

Caregivers to teens get instruction, inspiration

For the better part of a Saturday, 46 Central region caregivers came together to celebrate and commiserate as they learned more about parenting older youth. The DCFS Division of Clinical Practice and Professional Development prepared this specialized Caregivers Institute, "The Ins and Outs of Parenting Adolescents and Teens," to fill a pressing need. The parents who attended the training seemed eager for information on how to effectively give love and guidance to young people as they make their way toward a successful adulthood.

The day started with a refresher on some of the basics of foster care. Topics such as insurance and reimbursable expenses gain new relevancy as youth become teenagers. From there, the audience discovered the myriad resources within the DCFS Division of Service Intervention to help families prepare young people for self-sufficiency. In the next session, Education Advisor Mary Chepulis explained various educational opportunities for youth. She also covered how school policies on suspensions and expulsions can affect students with special educational needs

and how caregivers can be good advocates.

After refueling with a hearty lunch, the caregivers were ready to learn about the physical and emotional development of older youth. Dr. Michael Wonderlich of the DCFS Clinical Division explained that there are real biological reasons to explain sometimes perplexing teen behaviors. In the final session of the day, Listening So Teens Will Talk, Terry Liggitt of Prevent Child Abuse Illinois offered many recommendations to help adults and teens communicate better. These were illustrated during scenes acted out by a parent and teen, allowing the audience to see bad and good examples.

Regional Administrator Bob Blackwell closed the day by thanking caregivers for their amazing commitment to care for youth. By the end of the session, caregivers appeared refreshed and ready to relate better with the young people in their families. "This day was so successful, we're already looking forward to doing



Regional Administrator Bob Blackwell thanks the caregivers who spent a Saturday learning new skills to parent older youth.

it again in Spring 2006. Plans are underway and notice will be in future editions of this newsletter," said Ray Gates, acting chief, Office of Foster Parent Support Services. The training also included brochures from many programs, as well as many helpful articles. Those who would like more information or a copy of the materials can call 217-524-2422.

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Central Region medical providers

Finding the right provider for the medical, dental and vision needs of children in DCFS care can sometimes be a challenge. Below are providers that staff and families have been using. This list clearly does not include every provider in Central region's 50 counties. However, it can give caregivers a place to start when seeking medical, dental or vision services for youth holding an Illinois Public Aid medical card.

Providers in McLean, DeWitt, and Livingston Counties

Dental

- McLean County Health Department, Bloomington
309-888-5450
- Redbird Dental, Bloomington
309-664-6868
- Eastside Dental, Bloomington
309-661-0197
- Dr. Steadman, Bloomington
309-663-7221

Vision

- Livingston County Health Department, Pontiac
815-844-7174
- Dr. Pettit, Pontiac
815-842-4304
- Dr. Coady, Fairbury
815-692-2415
- Dr. Witte of Bard Optical, Bloomington
309-663-1519
- Gailey Eye Clinic, Bloomington
309-829-531X
- Walmart. In the month of October, Walmart sponsors Project Insight, which provides exams and optics for low-income families with no insurance and DCFS youth with special vision needs.

Hearing Screenings

- Livingston County Health Department, Pontiac
815-844-7174
- Illinois State University Speech and Hearing Clinic, Normal
309-438-8641

Peoria County Providers

Vision Examinations for youth 3 and older

All locations in Peoria

- Bard Optical, Campustown
309-672-2273
- Bard Optical, Metro Center
309-692-8222
- Bard Optical, Midtown
309-686-6491
- Carver Optical
309-674-3329

Hearing Screenings

- Easter Seals, 309-686-1177

Dental Examinations age 3 and older

- Peoria City County Health Department
309-679-6141

Providers in Rock Island and Mercer Counties

Medical

- Mercer County Health Department
1007 NW 3rd St., Aledo
309-582-3759

- Rock Island Health Department
2125 25th Ave., Rock Island
309-794-7080
- School Health Link
1504 10th St., Silvis
309-796-6360

Dental

- Mercer County Tooth Mobile visits the schools
Dr. Hanlin: 5202 38th Ave., Moline
309-792-2815
- Blackhawk Dental Care
4028 Blackhawk Rd.
309-786-5799

Vision

- Bard Optical
4032 Blackhawk Rd., Rock Island
309-786-9734
Takes medical card for exam, not glasses
- Mercer County Family Eyecare
106 S College Ave., Aledo
309-582-2421
- Rock Island Optometric
2501 24th St., Rock Island
309-788-0604

Hearing Screening

- Blackhawk Area Special Education District
4670 11th, East Moline
309-796-2500

Pictures and fingerprinting

In McLean and DeWitt counties, getting necessary fingerprints and photos is now easier. McLean County Health Department has coordinated multi-agency participation in a quarterly fingerprint and photograph day for youth in care who need this service. The location rotates to the various agencies, but all may participate in each day. Those that participate are: DCFS, The Children's Foundation, The Baby Fold, and Catholic Charities. Identex (the fingerprinting and photo supplier) has been helpful in meeting this need, and has agreed to go to any agency in need of having five or more youth fingerprinted and photographed at any given time.

Central Connections

Sponsor

Robert Blackwell, DCFS
Central Regional Administrator

Regional Reporter

Mary Bullock
2001 N.E. Jefferson St.
Peoria, IL 61603
Phone: 309-671-7900
Fax: 309-671-7906
E-mail: MBullock@idcfs.state.il.us

Anyone can call the regional reporter with foster parent association news and schedules; local training notices; features on foster families and community members working for children; photos; and ideas for news articles or supportive services that would be helpful for caregivers to know.

Tiny Seeds Hold the Potential for a Beautiful Life

Foster Families Fulfill the Potential of Tiny Lives

Heaven's eyes look down upon our soil
To observe the small gifts of smiles and tiny features
Looking to see what has grown
From the small seed given a little while ago.

Heaven sent the gifts to bring beauty to the earth
A wide variety of shades and hues
Different blends of humanity and races
To adorn this earth as a meadow of wild flowers.

Heaven desires each child to grow
In a circle of love and tenderness
Like the flowers that are nurtured
By the sun and rain and gentle winds.

Heaven knows that sometimes children need
to move to another place to find a richer love
As some flowers are damaged in the unkind
Climate in which they grow.

Heaven looks down upon the earth
And smiles to see how the flowers are blooming
Proud to notice that others give
Where some have faltered.

Heaven blesses those extra hands - Willing to heal and love;
Who give the extra time and attention
To return the bright colors and smiles
To the children that need this shelter.

We, along with heaven's smiles, wish to thank
Each and every man and woman
Who become the substitute sun and rain and gentle wind
Who help these precious ones grow into what they are to become.

Written by Randy Somers, DCFS Child Protection Investigator, to honor caregivers during Foster Parent Appreciation Month

Central Region Training Calendar

FosterPRIDE In-Service Training

All licensed foster parents and adoptive parents are welcome to attend any or all of the PRIDE In-Service Trainings to enhance their skills and meet yearly training requirements.

Module 1 - *The Foundation for Meeting the Developmental Needs of Children* (Four 3-hour sessions = 12 training hours)

Module 2 - *Using Discipline to Protect and Nurture* (Three 3-hour sessions = 9 training hours)

Module 3 - *Child Development* - New module being written

Module 4 - *Child Sexual Development and Sexual Abuse* (Three 3-hour sessions = 9 training hours)

Module 5 - *Supporting Relationships Between Children and Their Families* (Three 3-hour sessions = 9 training hours)

Module 6 - *Working as a Professional Team Member* (Three 3-hour sessions = 9 training hours)

Module 7 - *Promoting Children's Personal & Cultural Identity* (Two 3-hour sessions = 6 training hours)

Module 8 - *Promoting Permanency Outcomes* (Three 3-hour sessions = 9 training hours)

Module 9 - *Managing the Fostering Experience* (Two 3-hour sessions = 6 training hours)

Module 10 - *Understanding the Effects of Chemical Dependency on Children & Families* (Five 3-hour sessions = 15 training hours)

Peoria Area
888-507-7433

Champaign Area
888-467-6065

Module

Module

PEORIA - Lutheran Social Services
Sept. 8 & 15 (Thu)

6-9 p.m. 9

CHAMPAIGN - IETC

Sept. 17 (Sat) & 9 a.m.-4 p.m. 2
24 (Sat) 9 a.m.-12 p.m.

Educational Advocacy

Two 3-hour sessions = 6 training hours

It is mandatory for one foster parent in each family to attend Educational Advocacy Training in order to be re-licensed. Educational Advocacy Training is offered following each Foster PRIDE/Adopt PRIDE training and many additional times. This six-hour course covers information foster parents need to know so that they can advocate for their foster children's educational rights and needs.

Peoria Area
888-507-7433

EAST MOLINE **Black Hawk Coll.**
Sept. 15 & 22 (Thu) 6-9 p.m.

PEORIA **Children's Home**
Sept. 27 & Oct. 4 (Tue) 6-9 p.m.

PEORIA **Lutheran Social Svcs.**
Aug. 29 & Sept. 12 (Mon) 6-9 p.m.

**Pre-Registration is required
for all classes.**

Call the number listed for your area.

The DCFS Lending Library is a resource to allow foster and adoptive parents access to a multitude of books, audio cassettes and videos for self-directed training in parenting and family life. The materials span 17 categories. Licensed foster and adoptive parents can borrow materials for a two-week period at no charge. The order form is available in the 3rd Edition of the Lending Library Catalog, which can be viewed on the DCFS web site at www.state.il.us/dcfs.

For more information call:
Champaign Area 888-467-6065
Peoria Area 888-507-7433
Springfield Area 888-817-1875

